

White Hall
(Harpers Ferry National Historical Park)
Potomac St.
Harpers Ferry
Jefferson County
West Virginia

HABS No. WV-156

HABS
WV-156
19-HABS
18-

REDUCED COPIES OF MEASURED DRAWINGS
WRITTEN DESCRIPTIVE AND HISTORICAL DATA

Historic American Buildings Survey
National Park Service
Department of the Interior
Washington, D.C. 20240

HABS
WVA
19-HARF
18-

HISTORIC AMERICAN BUILDINGS SURVEY

WHITE HALL

HABS No. WV-156

Location Potomac Street west of the intersection of Potomac and Shenandoah Streets in Harpers Ferry, West Virginia

Present Owner National Park Service

Present Occupant None

Present Use None

Brief Statement of Significance

This building was erected in 1839 by William and Samuel B. Anderson and Dr. George B. Stephenson on land which was originally part of the Wager Six Acre Reservation. The Wagers were descendants of Robert Harper. It has been used as a warehouse, a tavern, and a residence. It was located in the downtown section of Harpers Ferry during the Civil War and was a backdrop for the Armory Engine House which served as a refuge for John Brown during his raid of 1859.

PART I. HISTORICAL INFORMATION

White Hall was erected in 1839 for use as a warehouse. It was a one story stone structure 24 feet x 40 feet. A second story of stone was added between 1847 and 1852. In 1856 the front half of the building was removed in order to widen Potomac Street and the remaining part is the present building of 24 feet x 20 feet. A new front on Potomac Street was added at that time. A front porch was added after 1894 and this was removed at an unknown date. In 1847 Anderson sold the property to Frederick A. Roeder who was a confectioner in Harpers Ferry. The 1860

WHITE HALL

Potomac Street, Harpers Ferry

Jefferson County, West Virginia

Census reported Roeder as the owner and that the structure was used as a residence by John Fitzpatrick, a stone cutter.

The name "White Hall" is found in a letter from Superintendent Henry W. Clowe in 1855 where he referred to the structure as "a Drinking House, known as White Hall,..." There is also evidence of whitewash on the southeast and northwest exterior.

Prepared by

Charles S. Dotts
Charles S. Dotts
Student Supervisor, HABS Team

Date July, 1959

A. W. Franzen
A. W. Franzen
Resident Architect, HFNM

Reference: Historic Building Report, by Charles W. Snell, Historian
(Park Supervisory), Part I, October 1, 1957, and Part II, March 30,
1959, Project No. HF-52.

WHITE HALL

Potomac Street, Harpers Ferry

Jefferson County, West Virginia

PART II. ARCHITECTURAL INFORMATION

White Hall is a rectangular shaped wall bearing stone structure consisting of two stories, a basement and an attic. The building is 20' x 24' and covers 480 square feet of ground area.

The walls are of rough cast native stone and they vary in thickness from 10" to 2'-0". The building appears to be structurally sound. In 1856 the front half of the building was removed in order to widen Potomac Street and the remaining part is the present building of 24' x 20'. This alteration required a new front at the northeast elevation. It is not known whether this front was a partition in the original building; however, the present second story and attic wall are of 10 inch brick walls. A front porch was added after 1894 but this has since been removed.

The stone exterior has been parged. Due to weathering, it is in poor condition with the exception of the northeast front which is in good condition. Traces of whitewash are seen on the southeast and northwest exteriors. The first story of the rear or southwest elevation is parged between vertical four inch lumber that has been removed. These were located from 1'-6" to 1'-9" apart. Also on this elevation is found four stone slabs protruding from the stone wall. These are about as high as the second floor ceiling. They are approximately 18 inches long, two to three inches thick and they protrude about one foot from the wall. Their use is unknown. The slate roof of the building

WHITE HALL

Potomac Street, Harpers Ferry

Jefferson County, West Virginia

has been replaced by rolled roofing. The two windows on the first floor of the northeast front have wooden shutters.

The interior of this structure is in poor condition. The basement floor is dirt, the first floor and joists have been removed, the second and attic floors are T&G boards $3\frac{1}{2}$ " to $6\frac{1}{2}$ " wide. The basement walls are unfinished. The first story, second story and attic walls are plastered on stone and the finish is wallpaper and paint. The wall finish is in poor condition. The ceilings are finished with plaster on lath. Each floor has one room with no partitions. The stairs from the first floor to the basement have been removed. The wooden stairs from the first to the second floor are in poor condition and the stairs from the second floor to the attic are in good condition.

The doors and windows appear to be the original ones and are in fair condition with the exception of the northwest second floor window and the northeast attic window. A first floor opening at the northwest side of the building has been closed with brick.

White Hall is located on the south side of Potomac Street just west of the intersection of Potomac and Shenandoah Streets in the downtown portion of Harpers Ferry. It served as a backdrop for the Armory Engine House which was a refuge for John Brown in his raid of 1859. The building's bearing is N 50° E.

Prepared by

A. W. Franzen
A. W. Franzen
Resident Architect, HFM

Charles S. Dotts
Charles S. Dotts
Student Supervisory, HABS Team

Date July, 1959

Addenda (Photographs):

White Hall

(Harpers Ferry National Historical Park)

Potomac Street

Harpers Ferry

Jefferson County

West Virginia

HABS No. WV-156

HABS

WVA

19-HARF,

18-

PHOTOGRAPHS
REDUCED COPIES OF MEASURED DRAWINGS

Historic American Buildings Survey
National Park Service
Department of Interior
Washington, D.C. 20013-7127